

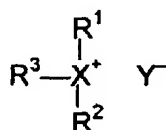
In the Claims

1        11. (currently amended): An aqueous solution comprising:  
2        water;  
3        at least one onium compound; and  
4        at least one additive selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acids,  
5                sulfonic acids, organophosphonic acids, phenolic compounds, ether  
6                sulfates, phosphoric acid esters, sulfonated fatty acids, sulfated fatty  
7                acids, oligocarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof, and alkali metal  
8                salts of these compounds and amine salts of these compounds ;  
9        where the onium compound partitions into a non-aqueous phase, and where an  
10       amount of the additive is sufficient to reduce toxicity of the aqueous solution as  
11       compared with an identical aqueous solution having an absence of the additive.

12. (cancelled)

13. (original): The aqueous solution of claim 11 where the additive is selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acids, sulfonic acids, and mixtures thereof, alkali metal salts of these compounds and amine salts of these compounds.

1        14. (currently amended): The aqueous solution of claim 11 wherein the  
2        onium compound has a structure of the following formula having a cation and an  
3        anion Y<sup>-</sup>:

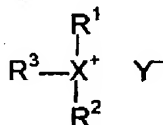


9 wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  each are independently selected from normal or branched  
 10 alkyls containing a chain of at least 4 carbon atoms, with or without  
 11 one or more substituents, or one or more heteroatoms;  
 12  $R^3$  is an organic moiety containing a chain of at least 4 carbon atoms,  
 13 with or without one or more substituents, or one or more heteroatoms;  
 14 X is S, N— $R^4$  or P— $R^4$ ;  
 15  $R^4$ , if present, is selected from H or an alkyl, aryl, alkylaryl, alkenylaryl or  
 16 alkenyl group, preferably these having from about 1 to about 20  
 17 carbon atoms, with or without one or more substituents, or one or  
 18 more heteroatoms; and  
 19  $Y^-$  is selected from the group consisting of hydroxide ion ( $OH^-$ ), halide  
 20 ions, carboxylate ions, sulfate ion, organic sulfonate ions, and  
 21 mixtures thereof.

15. (currently amended): The aqueous solution of claim 11 wherein the effective amount of the additive ranges from about 10:1 to about 1:10 in weight ratio with the onium compound.

16. (original): The aqueous solution of claim 11 further comprises a separately added non-aqueous phase.

1 17. (currently amended): An aqueous solution comprising:  
 2 water;  
 3 a non-aqueous phase;  
 4 at least one onium compound having a structure of the following formula  
 5 having a cation and an anion  $Y^-$ :



11                    wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  each are independently selected from normal or  
12                    branched alkyls containing a chain of at least 4 carbon  
13                    atoms, with or without one or more substituents, or one  
14                    or more heteroatoms;  
15                     $R^3$  is an organic moiety containing a chain of at least 4  
16                    carbon atoms, with or without one or more substituents,  
17                    or one or more heteroatoms;  
18                    X is S, N— $R^4$  or P— $R^4$ ;  
19                     $R^4$ , if present, is selected from H or an alkyl, aryl, alkylaryl,  
20                    alkenylaryl or alkenyl group, preferably those having  
21                    from about 1 to about 20 carbon atoms, with or without  
22                    one or more substituents, or one or more heteroatoms;  
23                    and  
24                    Y is selected from the group consisting of hydroxide ion  
25                    ( $OH^-$ ), halide ions, carboxylate ions, sulfate ion, organic  
26                    sulfonate ions, and mixtures thereof; and  
27                    at least one additive selected from the group consisting of  
28                    carboxylic acids, sulfonic acids, organophosphonic  
29                    acids, phenolic compounds, ether sulfates, phosphoric  
30                    acid esters, sulfonated fatty acids, sulfated fatty acids,  
31                    oligocarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof, and alkali  
32                    metal salts of these compounds and amine salts of  
33                    these compounds,  
34                    where the treated onium compound partitions into the non-aqueous phase, and  
35                    where the an amount of the additive is sufficient to reduce the toxicity of the  
36                    aqueous solution as compared with an identical aqueous solution having an  
37                    absence of the additive.

18. (currently amended): The aqueous solution of claim 17 wherein the effective amount of the additive ranges from about 10:1 to about 1:10 in weight ratio with the onium compound.

19. (original): The aqueous solution of claim 17 wherein the additive is selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acids, sulfonic acids, and mixtures thereof, alkali metal salts of these compounds and amine salts of these compounds.